

### AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. **(Currently amended)** A sound-absorbing material, wherein:

(a) a non-woven fabric with a mass per unit area of 150 to 800 g/m<sup>2</sup> and a bulk density of 0.01 to 0.2 g/cm<sup>3</sup> and (b) a surface material with an air permeability of not more than 50 cc/cm<sup>2</sup>/sec measured according to JIS L-1096 are layered by bonding, and the number of the bonding points of the non-woven fabric and the surface material is not more than 30 points/cm<sup>2</sup>, and the ratio of the total surface area of the bonding points to the total surface area of the bonding points and the non-bonding points is not more than 30%, and,

~~—— (a) the non-woven fabric is a needle-punched non-woven fabric, and~~

(b) the surface material is a spun bonded non-woven fabric or a wet-laid non-woven staple fabric.

2. **(Previously presented)** The sound-absorbing material according to claim 1, wherein the non-woven fabric (a) is a fabric in which a thermoplastic staple fiber and a heat resistant staple fiber with an LOI value of not less than 25 are intertwisted.

3. **(Original)** The sound-absorbing material according to claim 2, wherein the weight ratio of the thermoplastic staple fiber and the heat resistant staple fiber is in a range of 95:5 to 55:45.

4. **(Original)** The sound-absorbing material according to claim 2, wherein the weight ratio of the thermoplastic staple fiber and the heat resistant staple fiber is in a range of 85:15 to 55:45.

5. **(Previously presented)** The sound-absorbing material according to claim 2, wherein the thermoplastic staple fiber is at least one kind of staple fiber selected from the group consisting of a polyester fiber, a polypropylene fiber and a nylon fiber.

6. **(Previously presented)** The sound-absorbing material according to claim 2, wherein the heat resistant staple fiber is at least one kind of staple fiber selected from the group consisting of an aramid fiber, a polyphenylene sulfide fiber, a polybenzoxazole fiber, a polybenzothiazole fiber, a

polybenzimidazole fiber, a polyether ether ketone fiber, a polyarylate fiber, a polyimide fiber, a fluoride fiber and a flame resistant fiber.

7. **(Previously presented)** The sound-absorbing material according to claim 2, wherein the thermoplastic staple fiber is a polyester staple fiber and the heat resistant staple fiber is an aramid staple fiber.

8-9. **(Cancelled)**

10. **(Previously presented)** The sound-absorbing material according to claim 1, wherein the wet-laid non-woven fabric is comprised of a heat resistant staple fiber with an LOI value of not less than 25.

11. **(Previously presented)** The sound-absorbing material according to claim 1, wherein the wet-laid non-woven fabric is comprised of a heat resistant staple fiber with an LOI value of not less than 25 and a silicate mineral.

12. **(Original)** The sound-absorbing material according to claim 11, wherein the silicate mineral is mica.

13. **(Previously presented)** The sound-absorbing material according to claim 10, wherein the heat resistant staple fiber is an aramid staple fiber.

14. **(Previously presented)** The sound-absorbing material according to claim 1, wherein the surface material (b) has a dust generation number of not more than 500 particles/0.1 ft<sup>3</sup> of particles with a diameter of not less than 0.3  $\mu$ m measured by the tumbling method according to JIS B-9923 6.2(1.2).

15. **(Previously presented)** The sound-absorbing material according to claim 1, wherein the non-woven fabric (a) and the surface material (b) are comprised of the same kind of synthetic fiber.

16. **(Cancelled)**

17. **(Previously presented)** The sound-absorbing material according to claim 1, wherein the non-woven fabric (a) is in the shape of a polyhedron and the surface material (b) is layered on two or more faces of the polyhedron.

18. **(Previously presented)** The sound-absorbing material according to claim 17, wherein the non-woven fabric (a) is in the shape of a hexahedron and the surface material (b) is layered on both side faces of the hexahedron.

19. **(Previously presented)** The sound-absorbing material according to claim 1, wherein the non-woven fabric (a) is in the shape of a column or a cylinder and the surface material (b) is layered on the curved face of the column or the cylinder.

20. **(Previously presented)** The sound-absorbing material according to claim 1 having a multilayer structure comprising at least one or more layers of each of the non-woven fabric (a) and the surface material (b), wherein the both layers are united.

21. **(Previously presented)** The sound-absorbing material according to claim 1, which is used as a vehicle interior material or a vehicle exterior material.

22. **(Previously presented)** The sound-absorbing material according to claim 1, which is used as a sound-absorbing material for a lawn mower.

23. **(Previously presented)** The sound-absorbing material according to claim 1, which is used as a sound-absorbing material for a breaker.

24. **(New)** The sound-absorbing material according to claim 1, wherein the constituent fiber of (b) the surface material is a thermoplastic fiber having fineness of 0.5 to 30 dtex.

25. **(New)** The sound-absorbing material according to claim 1, wherein (a) the non-woven fabric is produced by needle punch method or water jet method.